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Ronald McDonald House
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Photo: Heather Fritz

Cover: Furniture maker James Hopper got his start in his father's backyard workshop and is still inspired by his Scandinavian heritage. Story begins pg. 12. Photo: René Prefontaine

HOME Front



Photo: Heather Fritz

Fall is in the Air

It's here already? But it was summer just a minute ago!

Ah, well. Autumn brings a whole new set of adventures, chores and anticipations. Those first sights and sounds of geese V-ing up for their trip south always stirs a little wistful twinge—not to mention a looming reality. Wedging my two wiggly boys into impossible layers of fleece, Gore-Tex, down filled Stay-Puft-Marshmallow-Man sleeves, mitts and boots. It makes shoving a square peg into a round hole seem like a breeze.

But we're not there yet. In the meantime, we have a whole season to revel in. Our fall issue has a lot for you to enjoy, too. Our cover story features the inspiration behind the creations of five local artisan furniture makers. You'll love what they do and why they do it.

How many people does it take to build a home? The answer might surprise you. What is less of a surprise lies in how many it takes to tear down a home. Fewer and faster! We take a look at infill guidelines and granny suites; the latter harkens back to the days when Grandma (maybe Grandpa, too) literally came to live in. Nowadays, we generally think rental income before relatives. And if that is the case, you will want to read our list of rental property do's and don'ts.

We are grateful to one local family who generously shares with us the worst experience of their lives—a house fire. Heed the cautionary advice this family hopes you'll never need.

Historian Jeff O'Brien takes us on a trip down Broadway Avenue, one of Saskatoon's most 'happening' promenades. He also makes a stop at the Ronald McDonald House, "the house that love built," at the corner of Clarence and University Drive, for a peek at the past, and at its new addition.

Finally, our resident foodie Craig Silliphant meets up with a local hunter whose hobby is smoking—but not the bad kind! This involves a metal box, slow-burning wood chips and lots of Canada geese. Oh, there's that wistful feeling again!

Enjoy our fall issue and your autumn. And start thinking about where you stored those rubber and winter boots.

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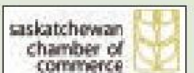
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Thank You To Our Fall Issue Reader Panel



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How the Reader Panel Works

#1

The publisher sends each panel member a number of story ideas.

#2

Each panel member rates the ideas from most interesting to least interesting.

#3

The answers from all six panel members are cross referenced.

#4

The highest rated stories are selected, and our writers and photographers are then assigned to bring those stories to life.

#5

For each issue, a new panel of 6 volunteers is selected.

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HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES IT TAKE TO BUILD A HOME

 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

Saskatoon is seeing a new housing boom, but have you ever stopped to wonder what it takes to build a house from the foundation up?

Saskatoon HOME contacted several builders in the city to find out how many people are involved in constructing a house. Estimates range from 70 to over 100 people.

We excluded office and administration from our calculations in order to keep the numbers manageable.

Wayne Halabura, president of Montana Homes, notes that the tradespeople who help build a house are trained for four years to become certified journeymen, and even for the trades that do not have classroom training, such as siding and concrete, just as many hours are needed in learning the skills needed to perform the work well.

"Every trade skill can be an art form in itself," says Wayne. "Everything has to be done correctly. And good trades people really take pride in their work."

When a builder uses quality trades it reflects through to the finished product.

It's easy for people to see painting or interior design as an art form, but jobs such as pouring concrete or installing heating systems take just as much skill and creativity, says Halabura.

"Every single step of the way, items have to be ordered in a timely manner," says Wayne. "If an item is delayed, it holds the next trade up. There are so many factors that are critical just in scheduling alone."

A house is the biggest purchase an individual will ever make, and in the end, a home is only as good as the tradespeople who build it, the home builder who coordinates it, and the home owner who holds the vision. A homebuilder's responsibility is to ensure all the trades are performing their jobs properly to keep the end vision on track, and the final list shows this is no small task. 

Ashleigh Mattern

Below is a list of each trade/profession and the approximate number of people in that team:

Design and planning - 1	Painting/priming - 3
Architectural technologist - 1	Finishers - 3
Surveyors - 2	Interior railing - 1
Construction managers - 3	Exterior railing - 1
Project manager - 1	Exterior stairs - 1
Water meter install/inspection - 1	Staining railing - 1
Gas line location by SaskEnergy - 1	Cabinets/millwork - 3
Gas line install/inspection - 5	Flooring/backsplash - 4
Power line location - 1	Countertops - 2
Power cable install/inspection - 5	Cleanup - 3
Excavating - 3	Shower glass and mirrors - 2
Foundation/footings - 5	Heating (furnace/ducts) - 3
Basement - 3	Central vac - 1
Sewer/water - 3	Windows - 2
Framing - 3	City inspector - 1
Plumbing - 3	Provincial Gas Inspection - 1
City plumbing inspector - 1	Design/decorating - 1
Mechanical - 3	Appliances delivery/install - 2
Electrical - 3	Stucco or siding - 3
Roof shingles - 2	Accents (wood/stone/brick) - 2
Insulation/vapour barrier - 2	Soffits/facia/down spouts - 2
Drywall - 3	Garage - 5
Taping/mudding/texturing - 2	

TOTAL = 104



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THROUGH THE EYES OF FURNITURE ARTISANS

Five locals showcase their latest favourites and offer the what, why and how



Some people don't give much thought to the things that surround us, things we use every day. A chair is a chair to sit on, a table a table for putting plates on. A desk for a computer.

Of course we want our homes and the things in them to look nice, but a bookcase

is something for books and knickknacks. Some people make decisions based on price, comfort and durability. But for others, while functionality is important, the aesthetic value is equally vital to a piece.

For those people, a desire for individuality and artistic expression manifests in the

choices made to furnish a home or office. While there are plenty of manufacturers out there and a plethora of big box, big name lines—and lots of stores that cater to more unique tastes—people who truly want 'one of a kind' pieces often turn to artisan furniture makers who work

with new and reclaimed wood, steel, concrete, leather and a variety of other materials, including ecofriendly and repurposed elements.

These craftspeople pour a lot of love, skill and passion into each custom creation, and relish the process from initial idea and design to final



 **KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER**  **RENÉ PREFONTAINE**

delivery into the customer's hands.

Saskatoon HOME selected five local craftspeople: James Hopper of James Hopper Furniture, Noah Rossmo of Green Ark Collected Home and Furniture, Louis Dombowsky of Azuza Design, Dale Muchowski of Taylor Made Furniture

and Kyle Harrison of Kyle J Customs. We asked them to tell us about their latest favourite piece, what or whom was its inspiration, where they'd like to see it end up and about that passion.



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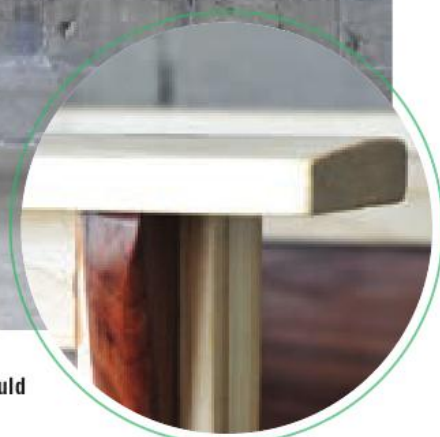
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Noah Rossmo – Green Ark Collected Home and Furniture



1) Describe your piece and any special features.

The 'Lady on a Mission' is made of one specific piece of poplar I've been saving for over five years. The panels are walnut and the upholstery is recycled leather jackets.

2) What was your inspiration?

When I started building chairs, my inspiration was from Frank Lloyd Wright. His design was very edgy and modern for his time but, alas, not very comfortable. So I was determined to create comfort in an armchair even though it is made mostly of wood. So I tweaked the Mission Style chair to create that comfort.

3) Into what style of space would this piece best fit?

Because it's a twist on a traditional design, I'd say this chair would adapt to many different styles and spaces. Because of its unique profile and materials, it would be the focal point within a modern room or more classic space.

4) What is your background as an artist and how long have you had a business in Saskatoon?

I've been doing custom orders for approximately nine years. We've also been building idea pieces and experimenting. My first formal exhibit was in 2009. The intention with Green Ark, our shop, was to create an outlet for me as well as like-minded craftspeople within the area and it's been very productive in helping me grow as an artist.

5) What is your favourite part in the process from concept to delivery?

The process in its entirety is what inspires and drives me. Designing, then strategizing about how to take a stack of materials and create something beautiful and functional is great. Even the delivery aspect is rewarding; when you get a happy customer who ultimately was a part of the creation of a piece they'll have for a long time is very cool.



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Louis Dombowsky – Azuza Design



1) Describe your piece and any special features.

11-gauge aluminum is bent to provide strength and rigid support to the tabletop. The clean modern base carries an indelibly rich tabletop as countless dry summers and icy blizzards have worked to mark the distinct look in this barn wood.

2) What was your inspiration?

'Capital' was inspired from the strength that is created by a single bend in a playing card and the weight it can carry after such a simple change in its profile.

3) Into what style of space would this piece best fit?

A space that balances time-honoured design as seen in character homes with tasteful modern touches in the décor.

4) What is your background as an artist and how long have you had your business in Saskatoon?

I was 17 when I felt the joy of turning an idea into a tangible piece of design that I fell in love with. Azuza has been in Saskatoon for two years now.

5) What is your favourite part in the process from concept to delivery?

When the structure of the piece becomes the main aesthetic attraction, when everything seems to flow together as if the chair or table wants to be made that way, that's when I get excited.

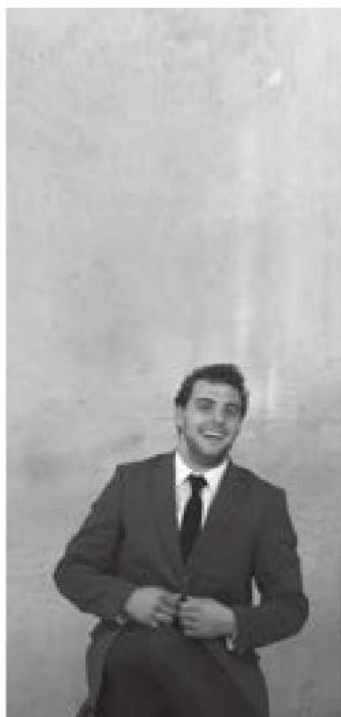


Photo: Tegan Barr

Dale Muchowski – Taylor Made Furniture



1) Describe your piece and any special features.

My 'Expandable Wave' table and chair are made entirely of solid sapele wood construction with macassar ebony inlays and a webbed leather seat.

2) What was your inspiration?

This table has evolved from a more simple design we did many years ago.

3) Into what style of space would this piece best fit?

Minimal modern to traditional dining rooms.

4) What is your background as an artist and how long have you had your business in Saskatoon?

We prefer to call ourselves furniture makers as opposed to artists. I think its a better description of what we do. Myself along with my wife Donelda have made hundreds of pieces of furniture for clients across Saskatchewan and beyond since we started in 1991. Our furniture is hand-made one piece at a time, using only the finest quality, all solid domestic and exotic hardwoods, no veneers. We stand behind our furniture with a life-time warranty.

5) What is your favourite part in the process from concept to delivery?

When the customer expresses their joy with their new piece of furniture.

Kyle Harrison – Kyle J Customs



1) Describe your piece and any special features.

The desk is designed to be comfortable for both standing or sitting on a counter-height chair. The high-end audio components in the cabinet give a top quality audio experience while placing the monitor at eye level. The coolest feature, a secret drawer concealed by the very appearance of the material used, maximizes the minimalist aesthetic.

2) What was your inspiration?

The space around me and my experience in that space is important to me. I like to have enriching and comfortable surroundings. I want to build things that I myself would like to use and feel those qualities from them, and from that process be able to help others create their ideal spaces.

3) Into what style of space would this piece best fit?

It would fit well in many types of places. Whether it be an office, home, or studio, the minimalist styling definitely lends itself to rooms that feel bright and very open.

4) What is your background as an artist and how long have you had your business in Saskatoon?

I've been living and working in Saskatoon for around two years. My background as a maker is highly varied, having many types of blue collar jobs and experiences along the way. I have been fortunate to learn skills and trades in several different mediums, which allows me to apply a diversified set of skills and vision to new creations.

5) What is your favourite part in the process from concept to delivery?

Seeing someone's reaction upon delivery is great, but my favourite moment is when a basic concept that I've been thinking about for awhile suddenly evolves into the ultimate vision I want to create. When that light bulb comes on, it's exciting because I never really know exactly when that is going to happen.





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James Hopper – James Hopper Furniture



1) Describe your piece and any special features.

This is a multi-purpose cabinet in Beech with a bone finish. Behind the sliding doors on this piece we have adjustable shelves for a variety of storage purposes. I love the simplicity, versatility and long, low lines.

2) What was your inspiration?

Our work is always inspired by the Scandinavian aesthetic of our heritage. With this specific design we had a goal to create something versatile for clients with varying needs. This piece will allow for lots of easy customization simply by changing the materials and inside storage. It could be a media cabinet, a bar or an elegant dining room sideboard. Our goal is always to produce fine, custom-made, hand-crafted furniture to make your home look good and make you feel good.

3) Into what style of space would this piece best fit?

Although the Scandi-centric aesthetic is there, it is not aggressively mid-century. This piece can easily flow into any contemporary décor and can be adapted for any room.

4) What is your background as an artist and how long have you had your business in Saskatoon?

Born and raised in Saskatoon, I'm a designer and maker of fine furniture. I was first introduced to woodworking in my father's backyard workshop. This interest soon became an obsession when I studied craft and design in Norway. Desire for more formalized training took me to Selkirk College, in Nelson, B.C., one of Canada's few fine woodworking schools. My contemporary styles have been featured in many regional and national publications, including *Style at Home*, *Harrowsmith Country Life*, *Homes West*, and *Western Living*.

5) What is your favourite part in the process from concept to delivery?

Although every aspect of a creative career is enjoyable, the best is always the delivery. A satisfactory completion and a happy client are unbeatable.



EVOLUTION OF THE INFILL

Making History in Saskatoon with Laneway Housing



 **ASHLEIGH MATTERN**

Saskatoon is set to increase its density, but if all goes well, you won't notice a difference.

The city has already started to roll out its new infill strategy, which is being reworked to encourage more development in existing neighbourhoods.

The first step of the strategy was to allow for garden and garage suites to be built. The bylaws were officially changed

in May and later this year, the city will be releasing new development regulations and guidelines for infill houses.

Infill development refers to the insertion of additional housing units into an established neighbourhood, including a secondary suite inside a house, a garden or garage suite, or site redevelopment.

The result of all these changes should be more dense neighbourhoods that still feel cohesive.

Laneway Housing

"[Laneway housing] provides choice of housing for people in our city," says Darryl Dawson, manager of the development and review section, Planning and Development, City of Saskatoon. "It provides an opportunity to have some appropriate density in our established neighbourhoods... It really provides ➤



Laneway housing has never been allowed in Saskatoon's history, making this a significant event.

an opportunity to develop on an area people aren't using to its full capacity."

There are two main types of laneway housing: garage suites, which are two-storey buildings with the living quarters built above a garage; and garden suites, which are one-storey buildings. There can only be one secondary suite on any given property, so there can be a basement suite or laneway housing, but not both.

Crystal Bueckert, designer with BLDG STUDIO INC, says one of the reasons she likes laneway housing is because it generates "an invisible second layer of living quarters."

"Twice as many people can be on one lot, and it doesn't affect the streetscape," she said.

In order to ensure laneway housing does remain unobtrusive, it currently falls under discretionary use in Saskatoon. Garden and garage suites have

to be reviewed and approved before they can be built. The process includes consultation with neighbours to ensure everyone is comfortable with the new property.

"They want to be certain that the neighbours are okay with it, that there's no drainage issue," said Crystal. "They're being pretty cautious so that nothing happens that will be adverse to the process."

While anyone can apply right now to build a secondary suite on their property, the process does take time, and Crystal cautions that homeowners will have to be patient while everyone figures out how this new type of property will be applied in Saskatoon.

New Regulations and Guidelines

The City of Saskatoon spent several years developing new regulations and guidelines for infill houses. They studied ➤





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best practices in other cities, evaluated existing neighbourhoods, held meetings with community stakeholders and conducted public consultations.

One of the main complaints the city receives about infill is that the houses affect the way water drains, impacting the properties around it. The new regulations and guidelines will address the drainage issue, as well as concerns including access to front driveways, the height of the main floor off the ground, how much area the building covers on the site and wall height, wall length and site width.

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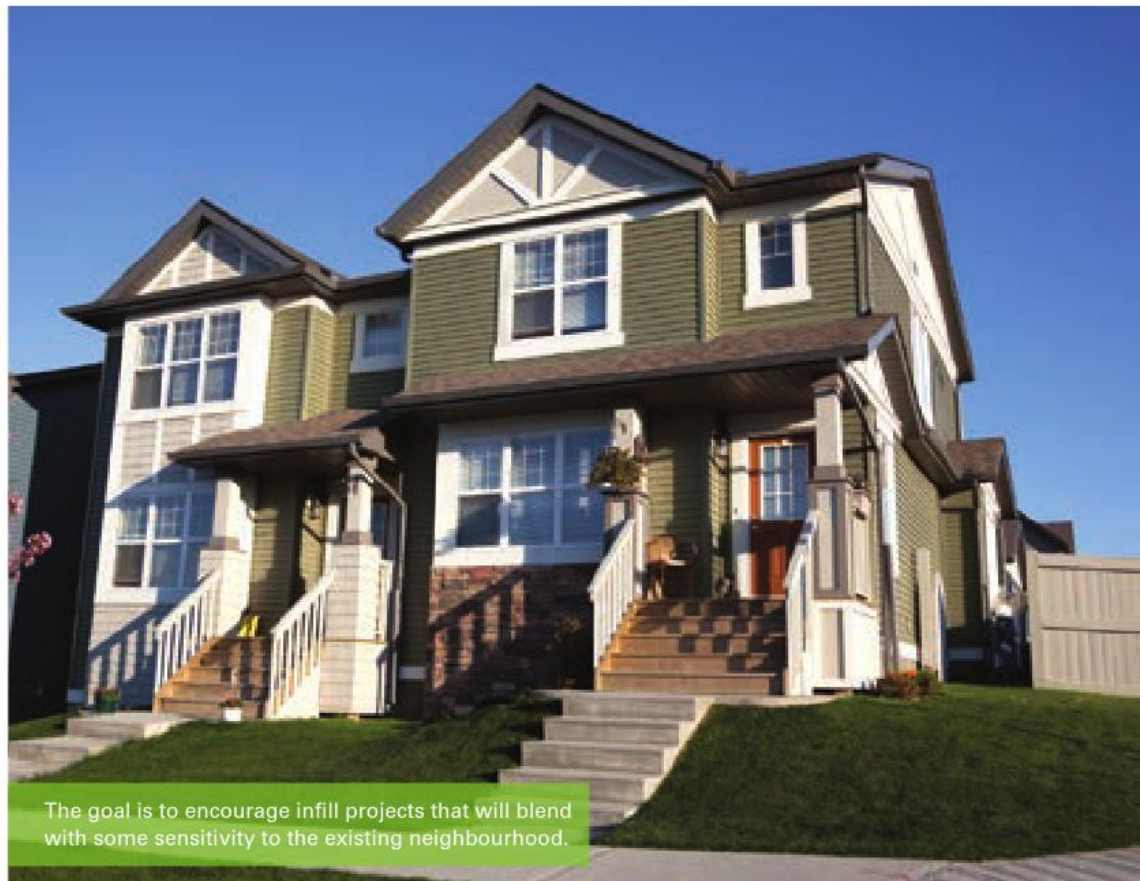


"The guidelines are going to be talking about the types of finish in the building and where your windows and doors are located. Things we can't regulate, but we really want developers to pay attention to in creating infill development that enhances the existing neighbourhoods," said Darryl.

Another proposed change includes allowing landowners to subdivide a 50-foot lot into two 25-foot lots, which could result in more smaller single family homes, and fewer semi-detached or two-unit dwellings.

The goal of these changes is to encourage infill while still being mindful of the houses that already exist in the neighbourhood.

Crystal is excited about the new changes, saying it's good that the city is paying more attention to what people are building, especially ➤



The goal is to encourage infill projects that will blend with some sensitivity to the existing neighbourhood.



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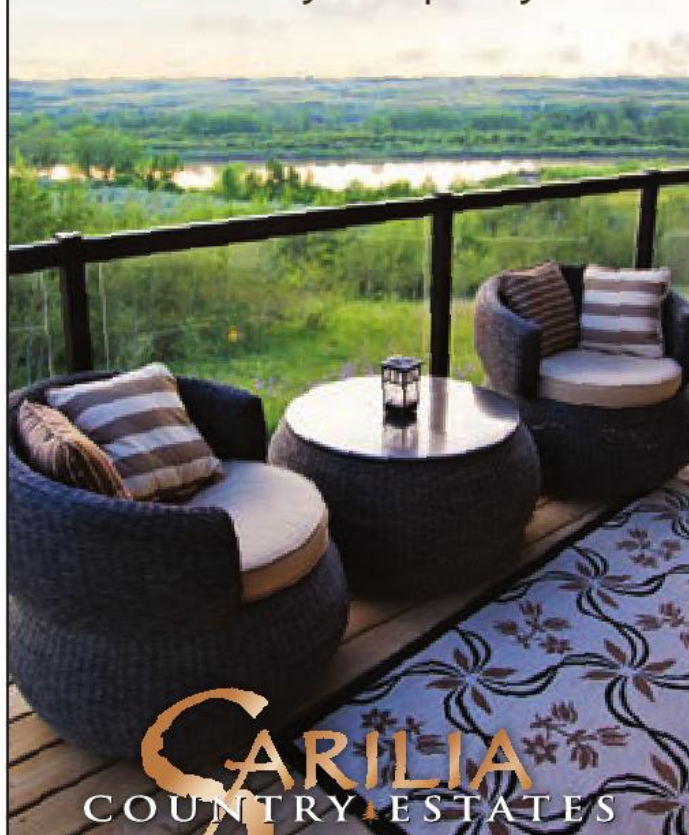
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considering older neighbourhoods are sought-after places to live.

Plus, as a designer, she's a fan of the restrictions: "You get some interesting designs when you have rules to work within," she said.

Nothing is set in stone for the new regulations and guidelines, but they should come into effect by the end of 2014. 

Ashleigh Mattern

INFILL CHANGES: WHAT TO EXPECT

While the new guidelines and regulations are still under development, the City of Saskatoon's Neighbourhood Level Infill Development Strategy outlines several areas that demand attention.

- Lot subdivision
- Front yard, side yard and rear yard setbacks
- Site dimensions, area, location and coverage
- Parking and site access
- Drainage and lot grading requirements
- Internal pathways and lighting
- Amenity space and landscaping
- Sustainable site design
- Height, depth and massing
- Upper storey setbacks
- Entrances
- Facades
- Doors and windows
- Roofs and dormers
- Balconies, porches and decks
- Materials
- Utilities and waste storage
- Sustainable building design
- Orientation, layout and privacy

RENTAL PROPERTY DESIGN

Do's and Don'ts



 AVIVA ZACK

If you own a rental property, or are thinking of owning one, there are two rules right off the top that you need to prepare for. The first, a rental property should appeal to a wide variety of tastes estheti-

cally. And the second is that it needs to be durable as it is unlikely to get the same level of upkeep as a space lived in by a homeowner.

So what do you do, and what shouldn't you do in making

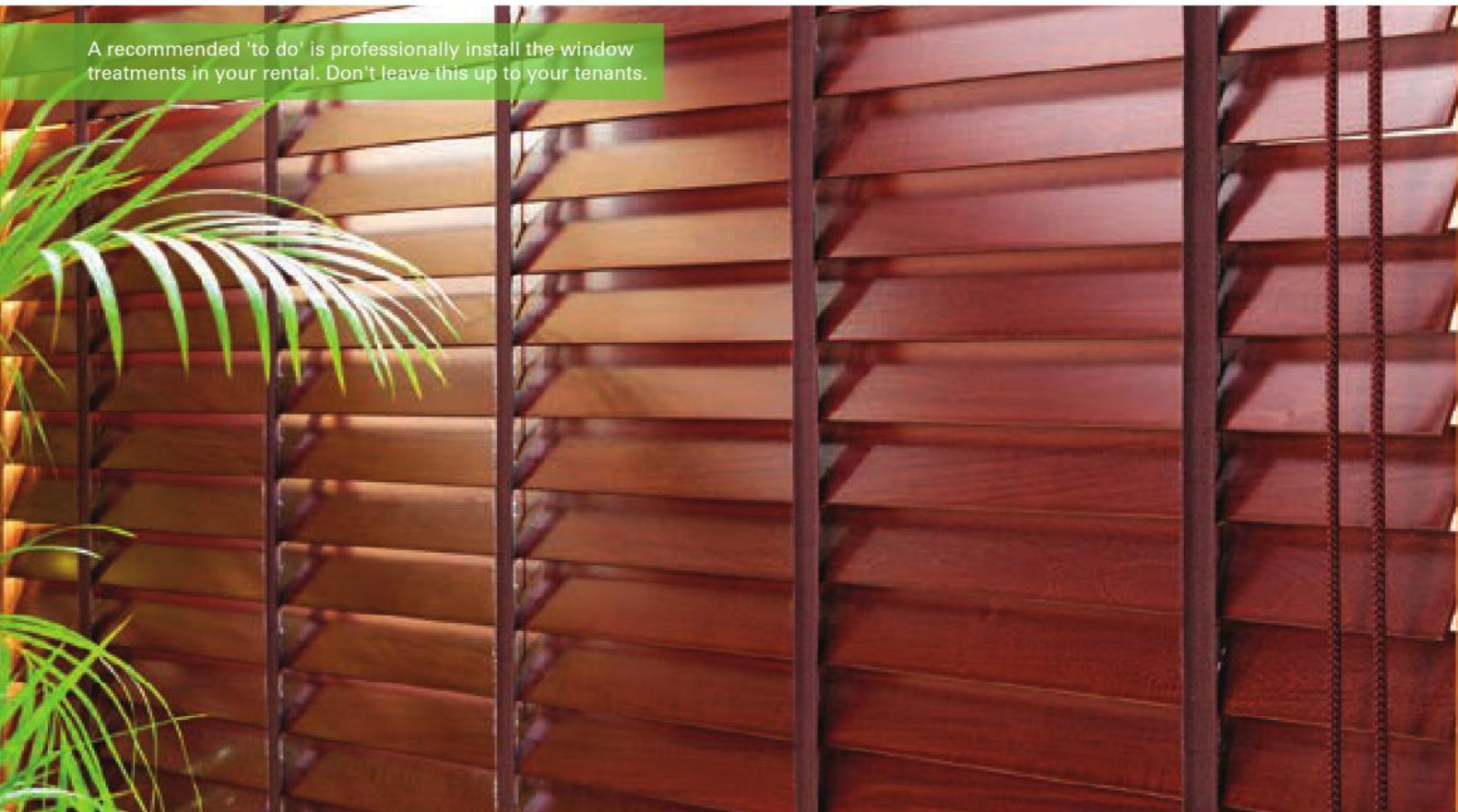
design selections for a rental property that will pique the interest of renters and require a smaller amount of maintenance?

Flooring

Do – Choose a quality lami-

nate in medium tones. The look of hardwood and tile are still most popular in homes, but with the range of options in laminate now available, it is a perfect choice for rental properties. It can mimic ➤

A recommended 'to do' is professionally install the window treatments in your rental. Don't leave this up to your tenants.



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the look of hardwood or tile, is low maintenance, budget-friendly and durable.

Do – Use carpet for bedrooms. Pamela Christie, a Certified Interior Decorator and Certified Staging Professional who owns Laurexa Design Inc., says carpet adds warmth in our cold climate. She suggests carpet made of nylon and Scotch-guarded with a good quality underlay to give it longevity. "Keeping the carpet confined to the bedrooms also ensures that if it needs to be replaced, it will just be a room and not the whole house or apartment," Pamela adds.

Don't – While dark flooring may be more popular, it is the quickest to show dirt and traffic flow. Mid-toned flooring is the most forgiving, and the best choice for a rental property.

Window Treatments

Do – Hire a professional. Pamela is also the In-Home Decorator for the Home Depot, and has seen first-hand the benefits of using someone knowledgeable to find the proper home window treatments. A professional will ensure the right measurements are taken, and that everything is well installed and warrantied.

Don't – Do not leave window treatments to a tenant to provide. Rather than take the chance that sheets or flags are hung with nails in the windows, install window treatments prior to renting, and save your window casings and frames from being damaged.

Do – Check whether a rental is part of a condo association that has regulations about window coverings. Many new builds want to maintain curb appeal, so they will stipu-

Avoid carpeting the entire rental space. It's best left in the bedrooms so that if there is damage, it's fairly localized. Use a good quality laminate elsewhere for good looks and durability.



late that window treatments have to be a solid white to the outside.

Don't – Buy window treatments that are not durable. Aluminum blinds are easy to bend and difficult to wipe clean, and treated fabric

blinds are more susceptible to stains in a rental. Faux wood blinds are the best option as they are affordable, Pamela says. They are easy to clean and stain resistant, and stand up to the rigours of most tenants. ➤

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Lighting

Do – Add some bling to your rental. Since a light fixture is a feature that most people don't touch, it is an easy way to add some 'wow' to a space for a low cost and less worry about damage.

Don't – Do not choose a semi-flush sconce fixture, as these tend to show dust build-up and bugs, while a bling fixture tends to hide dust much better.

Paint

Do – Use a scrubable eggshell finish, which is the easiest to wipe and maintain. A satin finish for the baseboards and trim is best, since it has a harder finish.

Don't – Make sure not to throw away paint can formulas. It is faster and easier to repaint in between tenants rather than spot treating. Only one coat will be necessary if you are

repainting the same colour. "Paint refreshes a space like nothing else, and you will rent faster when repainting between tenants," Pamela says.

Colours

Do – Keep it neutral. Paint stores have wide varieties of neutral palettes. Choose one without an undertone of another colour. Neutrals give renters much more flexibility with their décor. Once a main house colour is selected, a way to add some pizzazz, according to Pamela, is to pick a shade two levels below the main colour and paint a feature wall. This adds some drama to a space for a low cost.

Don't – Ensure tenants know that they need permission to do any interior painting. If they are allowed, have them agree to change the colour back before they move.



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Outside

Do – Remember the outside of a home is important too. First impressions are big when trying to attract renters. Small inexpensive details like yellow flowers planted outside or solid black house numbers

with matching mail box, are appealing and will draw more interest in a rental property.

Don't – Make sure to choose finishings that are within the budget market you are renting in. Higher end finishes come with higher price tags. This

goes for design choices both outside and inside a rental property.

And Finally...

Do – Home stage a rental show suite. People rent based on how a space makes them

feel. Whether a property is for sale or rent, Pamela knows from experience that a beautifully decorated space can show how each room can be utilized, getting renters in faster. Well worth the cost. 

Aviva Zack



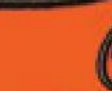
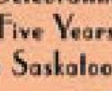
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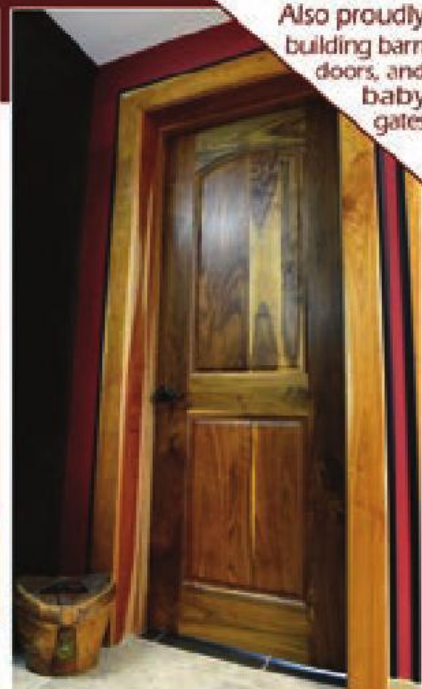
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A Home With a Mission

Up near the end of Clarence Avenue there is a very special house. It is a place where the rooms are bright and inviting, where there are playrooms and TV rooms, spacious kitchens and dining rooms, quiet rooms to read in or to settle a fussy baby, and even rowdy rooms for those days when you just have to get noisy. It is a place for families. Some stay for a few days. Some for weeks.

One stayed a whole year. It is Saskatoon's Ronald McDonald House where, for a nominal fee, out-of-town families can live while their children receive treatment in one of Saskatoon's hospitals.

The first Ronald McDonald House opened in Philadelphia in 1974. The idea spread and others soon followed, with the first Canadian House opening in Toronto in 1981,

and in Saskatoon in 1985. Today, there are 315 Ronald McDonald Houses in 31 countries offering more than 3,000 bedrooms to families in need.

Built at a cost of \$1.4 million, Saskatoon's original Ronald McDonald House was a three-storey brick building with accommodation for 13 families, a common kitchen, play rooms, a television room and sitting room. There was a ping pong

table and video games in the basement for teenage guests, and the main lobby boasted a beautiful spiral staircase and a fireplace. Architecturally, it was designed to blend into the existing neighbourhood, and in fact won a heritage award in 1989 as a "sensitive infill development." The money to build it was donated. Major donors included the Kinsmen Foundation and the



JEFF O'BRIEN



HEATHER FRITZ

McDonald's restaurants, but the rest came from families, individuals and business from all across Saskatchewan.

When it officially opened on September 12, 1985, there were already four families registered there. Demand grew steadily in the years that followed. Between 1985-2011, 16,500 families stayed at the House, an average of nearly 600 a year. But waiting lists

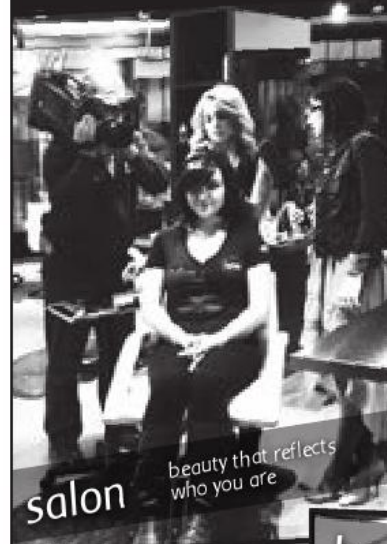
increased as need outstripped capacity. From 2001-2009, the occupancy rate grew from 65 per cent to 92 per cent. One-in-three families had to be turned away, and that number was expected to rise.

It was clear that Ronald McDonald House needed to expand. In 2007, the lots immediately to the north were purchased, and in March of 2012, a \$10 million capital ➤



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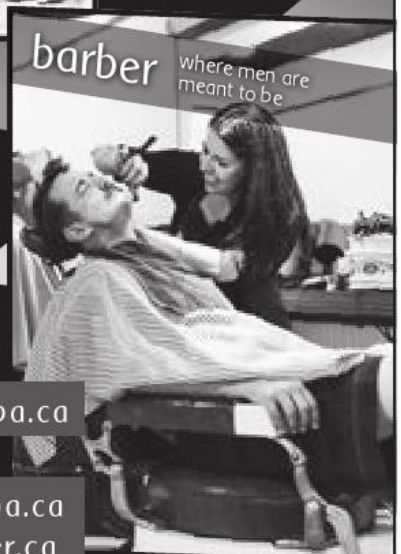
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Now that the addition is done, Tammy Forrester, Executive Director, looks forward to the grand opening of the renovated original House, which was built in 1985.



fundraising campaign kicked off. That fall, construction began on a 42,000 square foot addition. It was completed in April 2014, and includes two huge kitchens (with enough room for three or four families to cook meals simultaneously), a large dining room, sitting rooms, a computer room, play rooms and other amenities. Most importantly, it has 27 new guest rooms, including bariatric and barrier-free rooms for those with special needs. When it was complete, renovations began on the original House, which will re-open this fall.

It costs around \$110 per room to cover operating costs. At \$10 per night, guest fees cover only a small fraction of this. Fundraising campaigns such as McDonald's McHappy Days, Happy Meal campaigns and coin boxes account for about a third of ➤

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revenues, and the rest comes from private donations and bequests.

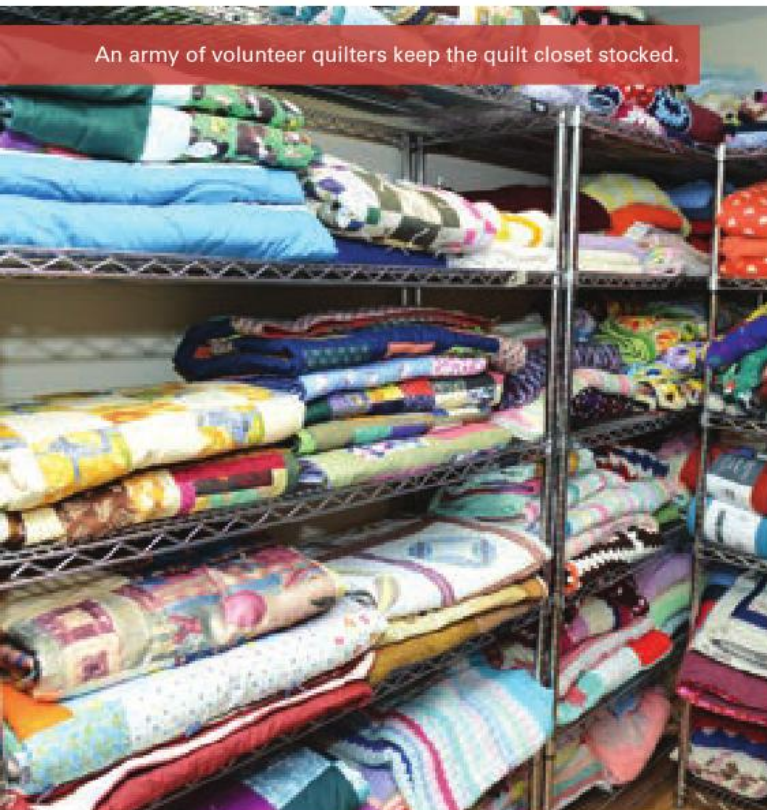
Ronald McDonald Houses aren't hotels; they're communities. Residents buy their own groceries, cook their own meals, do their own laundry and clean their own rooms. They have their own cupboard and fridge space to store food and supplies in. There is also a community pantry for those who haven't picked up groceries yet, or who, perhaps, cannot afford to. The room fee may also be waived in the case of need.

Then there are the quilts. There is a room in the basement that is filled with donated games, toys and quilts. Lots and lots of quilts. They're a signature of the Ronald McDonald Houses, and ➤



The upgraded spacious kitchen is efficient and comfortable, and several families can use it at the same time.

An army of volunteer quilters keep the quilt closet stocked.



A calm, stress-free environment is the goal at a time when there is enough worry and concern about the health of a child.

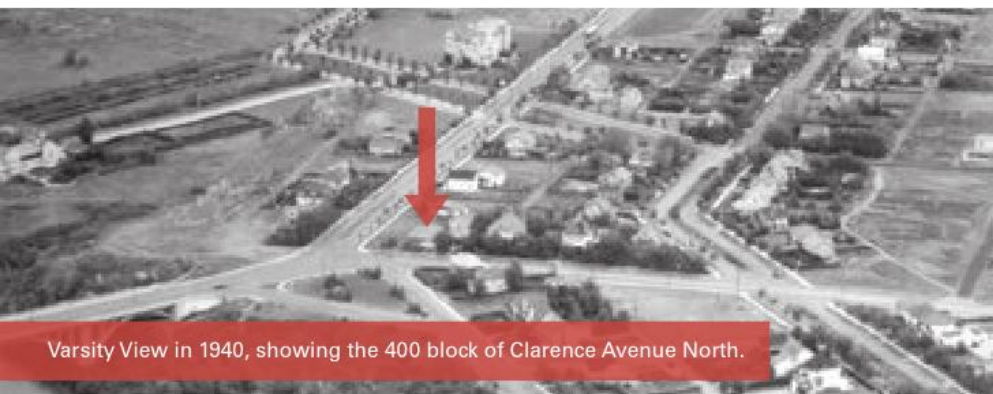
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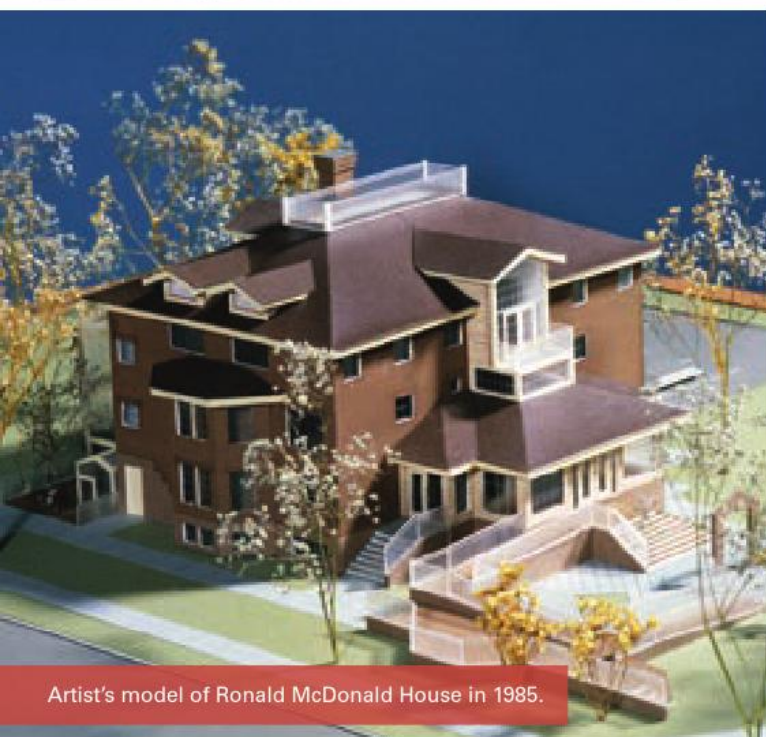


Varsity View in 1940, showing the 400 block of Clarence Avenue North.

Photo: HSF019-03 - City of Saskatoon Archives



One of many dedicated volunteer cookie bakers.



Artist's model of Ronald McDonald House in 1985.

Photo: CP 8757 - Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library

are given to residents to take home along with a toy or game for the children. The quilts are all donated—quilters are a generous bunch, as everyone knows—and they are always in demand.

Between the shared kitchens, sitting rooms, play rooms and TV rooms, there's plenty of opportunity for residents to get to know each other. They already have a common bond: all of them have a sick child in a Saskatoon hospital, and it would be hard to stay strangers in that sort of environment. But it also helps that the people who stay there are willing to share, like the lady who baked five dozen cookies to pass around to the other

guests. With the new renovations, however, there is one thing they won't have to share anymore: bathrooms. The original house was built like a bed and breakfast, with washroom facilities down the hall. In the new design, each room has its own.

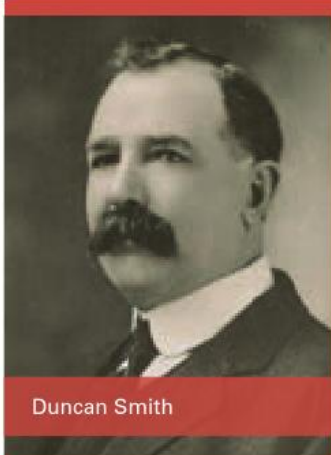
Finally, there's the staff. Ronald McDonald House could not do what it does without its friendly staff, and especially not without the army of volunteers, including those who come in every day to bake cookies. Because what would a home be without fresh-baked cookies? 🍪

Jeff O'Brien

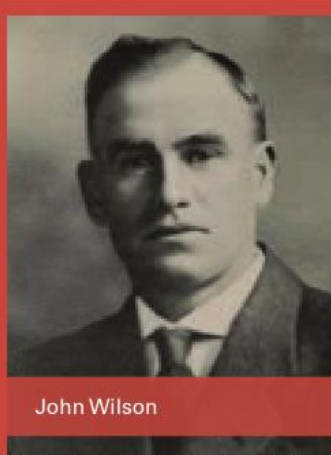


1913 Fire Insurance Plan showing original houses on the present-day Ronald McDonald House site.

Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives



Duncan Smith



John Wilson

Photos: Courtesy Smith Bros. and Wilson

Ronald McDonald House stands on the site of three much older buildings constructed during the boom years of the early 20th Century.

The first, at 401 Clarence Avenue North, was an elegant, two-and-a-half storey duplex occupied by Duncan Smith and John Wilson, whose contracting firm constructed the first buildings at the University of Saskatchewan. It became a home for convalescents in the 1940s, and was later a seniors' residence operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. During the 1950s and '60s, it housed the Pius X Seminary with the late Father Bob Ogle serving as rector, and by the early 1970s it had become a rooming house. At about the same time, the house next door at 409 Clarence was also made into apartments. Both catered mostly to university students. The last of the three at 417 Clarence Avenue North was a convent, home for many years to the Serving Sisters of Mary of the Immaculate Conception.

Regrettably, all three of these buildings were demolished to build Ronald McDonald House. But the new building incorporates many of the design elements of those it replaces. It won a civic heritage award in 1989 for just this reason. More importantly, Ronald McDonald House inherits the tradition of service to the community that has been a part of this block since the 1940s.

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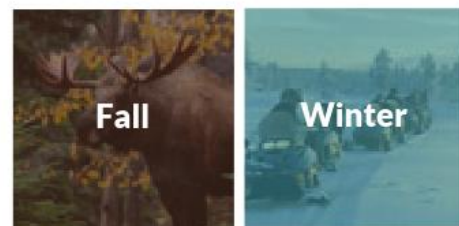
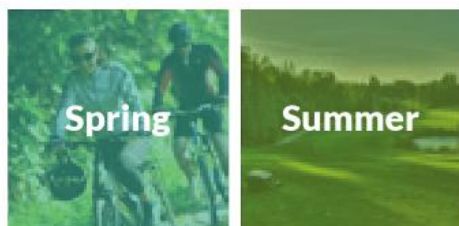
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 JULIE BARNES

AGING GRACEFULLY

A Road Map to Answers

Blanche, Dorothy, Rose and Sophia seemed to have it pretty good. The four *Golden Girls* lived their golden years independently while enjoying each other's company. In the short-lived spinoff of the show, the storyline reflects the realities of the aging process when Sophia moves into the Shady Pines retirement home.

In real life, making such a transition can be a daunting task. In Saskatchewan, some types of seniors' housing are subsidized, while others are not. The options may have different names (retirement residence, enriched living, assisted living) but often their services overlap. In contrast, although two separate homes

may call themselves the same thing—assisted living, for example—the services they provide may vary significantly.

Whether you're transitioning to seniors' housing yourself or assisting a family member with such a move, the process can be challenging and stressful for everyone involved. Having a clear understanding of all the

options available, as well as the costs and what they cover, can help make the move a little less overwhelming.

When Is The Right Time?

Elaine Redekop, general manager of The Palisades and Villa Royale retirement residences, has been helping families with these transi- ➤

LIVING OPTIONS: QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do you have criteria for tenancy? If I move in, what happens if my health deteriorates and I no longer meet the criteria?
- Are the common areas and private suites wheelchair accessible?
- What services does my rent or life lease include? (Consider if you truly need the services you'll be paying for. For example, some homes may include all meals. If you still want to cook some of your own meals, or have meals outside the home, this service may make you feel tied down.)
- What services will cost extra?
- What kind of training do the employees have?
- What kind of transportation is provided? Is there an extra charge for this?
- Is there an emergency response plan in place?
- What kinds of social activities or outings do you provide?
- Can I bring in home care services?
- If I move in to a two-bedroom suite with my partner and one of us passes away, does the surviving partner have to vacate the suite? (Some—not all—homes in Saskatoon have a policy requiring the surviving partner to vacate within three days of their partner's death, an incredibly stressful requirement of which residents should be aware.)
- Can I receive assistance with my medication?
- How often does rent increase?
- Can I bring my pet?
- Will I be supported to keep in touch with my family and friends?

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tions for the past six years.

"For families one of the hardest things is making that choice. 'Is it time? When is the *right* time?' Our natural tendency is to hang on to the good times," she says. "We want to affirm Mom's good days. But, the important thing to understand is when Mom or Dad is vulnerable, it's on their bad days. So we need to measure their needs by their bad days, not their good ones. Yes, they can live independently on their good days, but what happens at other times? Do they take their medications correctly? Do they remember to eat? Are they storing their food safely? All those kinds of questions become relevant."

When the time comes to move from one's own home into seniors' housing, there are many options available depending on the individual's physical, mental and medical

needs. Although the choices can seem overwhelming, Elaine says, "Often people say they want independence but really what they want is respect and dignity. There's dignity in having choices."

Enriched and Assisted Living

Enriched living is often the natural progression from living independently in one's own home.

"In enriched living at our facilities we provide some but not all meals, hotel-like house-keeping services, a nurse clinic, but not personal care," says Elaine. "There are services in place but they're living independently. They have a full kitchen in their suite and that's really an important distinction that separates enriched living from assisted living."

In looking at enriched seniors' house, asking about social and recreational activi-

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ties for residents, as well as scheduled transportation to local amenities such as grocery

stores and shopping centres may be an important element in your decision making process.

TOURING FACILITIES

It's important to tour any of the homes you're considering. Here are a few things to look out for when touring the facilities:

- Are the residents participating in social activities? Do they seem happy and engaged? Ask the facility representative if you can speak to residents and ask them if they enjoy living there.
- Do the employees seem to enjoy their jobs? Are they interacting with the residents? Don't hesitate to chat with them and ask if they enjoy their work and how long they've been employed there.
- Are the facilities clean and well maintained?
- Ask to see the home's licence. This licence must be posted at all times and will list the name of the person or corporation that holds the licence.
- Ask to see a menu plan and whether they can accommodate special dietary needs if necessary.
- Ask the operator for references from previous residents or family members of residents.
- Ask to see a copy of the rules of the home.
- Consider how close the home is to amenities such as a grocery store, pharmacy and your doctor's office. If you'll be relying on public transit, confirm if the home is on a transit route.

Assisted living is often the next step for people who need increasingly more services and help with daily tasks. Often, all meals are provided and a menu of services is provided for an additional fee on top of the monthly rent. Both publicly funded and private options exist.

Enriched and assisted living homes are often referred to as retirement residences. Although medical and personal care services may not be provided by the operator, it's often possible to bring in home-care services if necessary.

Personal Care Homes

The next step in the seniors' housing continuum is a **personal care home**. In Saskatchewan these homes are provincially regulated and licensed but are privately owned and operated. Typically, these homes provide all meals, 24-hour staffing, personal laundry service, medication management and guidance or assistance with personal care. They may also offer social and recreational activities. While some personal care homes

have nurses on staff, most employees in these homes aren't nurses.

"This level of care meets the niche of those people past being able to live independently. They get medication management, they get all their meals, they get assistance with personal care, but for instance at our facility we do not offer procedures like oxygen care, bowel incontinence, behavioural management, or night wandering. This however is not the case with all facilities," says Elaine.

Special Care Homes

When a personal care home no longer serves the needs of seniors, the last transition is to a **special care home** (also referred to as long-term care or nursing homes). These homes are for seniors with heavier care needs who require around-the-clock medical care and assistance, but do not need hospitalization.

Admission to special care in Saskatchewan must be approved through the local health region. Client/Patient Access Services (CPAS) completes an assessment at no cost to the client, and works with the client and their family to determine appropriate services.

Design Details

Many care homes in Saskatoon are experiencing a large demand from residents and many are expanding to keep up with this demand. Villa Royale for instance is in the process of expansion. They're building 54 additional enriched living suites that will connect to their current building via a skywalk. They hired Brett Johnson, an architectural technologist and owner of Final Draft, to create the construction drawings.

Brett says national ➤



building codes dictate that common areas must be barrier free for wheelchair accessibility

and a certain percentage of the suites must be fully accessible. "You can accomplish that

in a number of ways," says Brett. "One of the big factors would be ramping in and out of

the building, and for multiple floors you need to have an elevator. Your doors all have to be accessible with a button (automatic doors). You can't have any obstructions and door sizes all have to be wider." He also notes that a wheelchair-accessible suite will have an angled or adjustable mirror, higher toilets and grab bars around the toilet and tub or shower. Vanities will be lower and won't have cabinets below so that the wheelchair can roll underneath. If there is a balcony or shower stall in an accessible suite, both will have zero-threshold entrances. Older buildings in Saskatoon often aren't wheelchair accessible, so if that's an important factor, ensure you check before signing on the dotted line.

Payment Options

Care homes are government regulated, and one of the rules states that suites are to be rented on a month-to-month basis. If you are told that a longer term lease must be signed this is likely in violation of the regulations

ENRICHED AND ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENCES

Several enriched and assisted living residences in Saskatoon compare their monthly rates on an annual basis. The rates below reflect the minimum and maximum rates of these participating homes. Rates are subject to change and can vary significantly between various residences depending on the amenities and services provided.

Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	2nd Person
\$1430-\$2725	\$1330-\$3750	\$1615-\$4215	\$215-\$600

PERSONAL CARE HOMES

The Ministry of Health provides a personal care home registry on their website, which includes rates for each licensed home. Room rates in Saskatoon currently range from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per month. However, these figures include everything from renting a bedroom in a private house with minimal services, to renting a room in a multi-unit retirement residence with access to amenities, meals and a range of services. Ballpark monthly rates for care homes with amenities and services like those at The Palisades or Villa Royale are as follows:

Single	Double	Single in Double room
\$2175-\$2762	\$3675-\$4550	\$2355-\$3945

SPECIAL CARE HOMES

Special care homes in Saskatchewan are subsidized. Residents of these homes pay a monthly fee determined by their income and earned interest. As of April 2014, the monthly resident charge ranges from \$1,035 to \$1,970. Monthly fees are adjusted quarterly. To find more information on Personal Care Home Benefit (PCHB) you can visit www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca/pchb.

set forth. Being privately owned and operated, the costs are not subsidized by the government. However, seniors with low incomes can apply for the Personal Care Home Benefit (PCHB) managed by the Ministry of Social Services. The PCHB provides monthly financial assistance to help with the cost of living in a licensed personal care home. Rental costs vary significantly based on the amenities provided and services included (see sidebar for details).

As an alternative to renting, some residences provide a payment option called **life lease**. With a life lease, a single, upfront payment is made and the cost depends on factors such as market value, the resident's life expectancy and the redemption value at the end of the lease period. Life-lease residents are

neither owners nor renters. Rather, they have a leasehold interest in their accommodation, defined by a contract. This provides them with a "life-time" right to occupy their suite. There are monthly fees to cover management and maintenance costs. When an occupant of a life lease moves out or dies, they or their heirs receive the amount redeemable at the end of the lease (some types of life leases have no redemption value, however this isn't common in Saskatoon). This amount and how it is calculated varies significantly depending on the type of life lease. For more information on life leases, visit the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's website and search for "life lease." 

Julie Barnes

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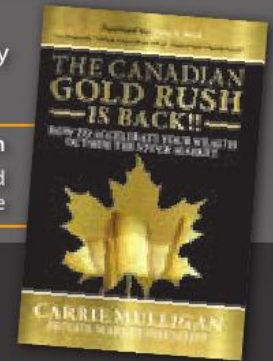
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OUT OF THE FIRE

A Must Read To-Do List



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER



HEATHER FRITZ

Devastated. It's a word people toss around almost as much as 'awesome' when too often, it just doesn't fit the enormity of the circumstance. But Steve and Leahann

McMorrow and their four children have earned the gravitas. It's been about a year and a half since a housefire changed their lives and now the McMorrow's offer useful advice they

hope others will never need.

The McMorrow's' home on their Grandora acreage 20 kms west of Saskatoon burned to the ground on New Year's Day, 2013. The family's nine-year-old

Boston Terrier, Baxter, and Tuck the Turtle died, and everything was destroyed. Since then, they've been putting life back together—insurance claims, built a house, replaced ➤



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possessions and through the process have thought of what could have been done differently.

"We'd just renovated a 1970s home," says Steve, "and moved in in August."

"Our fourth child was born in September," says Leahann. "The kids were just seven, five, two and the baby was just four months old. A new home, a wonderful welcoming community, the new baby." She tears up remembering even now. "We'd been at a family New Year's Eve village potluck at the local rink; kids skated and

played board games. Going to bed that night, we felt so lucky to be part of this community."

The next day, the family piled into the truck, leaving Baxter behind for a couple of hours, the kids happy to see Grandma and Grandpa on New Year's Day. When they came back home, Leahann remembers thinking something wasn't right.

"The windows seemed so black and I thought that was strange," she says. "I noticed a bit of smoke coming from the eave and said, 'Steve, the house is on fire.' That's when



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Fergus plays with recently adopted kitty Oscar who prefers the house to the barn.

Steve opened the door and all the windows shattered."

Things began to move very fast, and then agonizingly slowly as they tried to give the 911 operator their location. Steve attempted just once to reach inside the door to grab his wallet, sitting in plain view, but the heat was so intense, he had to abandon any thought of retrieving anything. As Leahann tried to give the land location and directions, the dispatcher kept telling her it "wasn't good enough." Acre-

ages outside Saskatoon aren't marked with physical section numbers as they are in other provinces.

"She finally asked me what section we were on and I said, 'The one that's on fire!' You could see the billowing smoke for miles," says Leahann. Steve activated the truck GPS so the fire department used that to navigate. When they arrived, even though the house wasn't fully engulfed, firefighters said there was nothing to be done. A Google search of Gran- ➤



Megan and Madalyn love their new bedroom.

Steve and Leahann with Fergus, Megan, Finnegan and Madalyn. "As we drove away, we had all four kids with us in the truck so it could have been so, so much worse."



MCMORROW PRE- AND POST-DISASTER ADVICE:

- A list of your possessions is good, a video record is better. Keep it up to date.
- Keep receipts of important purchases (your insurance company will want as much detail as possible as you work to replace items).
- Keeping copies of critical documents, passports, insurance coverage, receipts, wills is important; keeping those copies somewhere else is critical. Upload to the Cloud. Have parents or friends keep a folder for you. Safety deposit boxes are always a good option.
- Don't assume that your home insurance covers what you think it does. Carefully review. Ask questions of your insurance agent. They should be willing to answer your 'what if' questions.
- Ask your insurance agent if your fire protection policy includes the cost of fighting fires (trucks, labour) not just loss of property.
- Have an insurance broker who can go to bat for you. You won't be in the right frame of mind to advocate for yourself as you navigate the process.
- If you're building or renovating, ask your contractor about preventative measures.
- Create a fire escape plan with your family and practice periodically.
- If on an acreage, program your land description, longitude and latitude into your phone, and have it written inside your vehicles glove compartment.

dora fire still shows pictures of the devastation.

"I remember driving away to go to Steve's parents' house," recalls Leahann, "and in the rear view was this big black plume of smoke. I thought, 'That's our life.' It struck me that we were never going home again." But, she adds, "all four kids were in the truck with us, so it could have been so, so much worse."

The couple offers some advice; some measures to take now and some tips to make recovery a bit easier (see sidebar). Leahann thought she was prepared; a handy box contained passports, birth certificates, documents, even home movies when the children were babies. "I always thought, 'If something happens, the box is ready for me to grab and go.'" In hindsight, Leahann knows copies

kept elsewhere would have been wise.

And just because there's an insurance policy, it doesn't mean it covers what or how you might expect. What does 'replacement cost' really mean? What proof do you need that possessions existed? And does it cover the cost of fighting the fire?

Now three, son Finn doesn't remember the fire but now when he sees a house being built, he always asks, "Did their house burn down, too?" Nearly two years later, a new puppy, Otis, has taken Baxter's honoured place as the family dog.

The McMorrows have made some other changes, too. They built on the same spot, and insisted on beyond-code electrical and fire preventative materials.

"If anything good came out of this, I think it's made us ➤

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NEED TO KNOW FOR ACREAGE OWNERS

The old-fashioned fire drill idea is still a solid one, says Ryan Maloney, president of the Saskatchewan Land Surveyors' Association. While each parcel of property has a unique land description including quarter section, section, township, range, parcel number and title number, those descriptions may not be much practical use to some emergency responders. Maloney is a branch manager with Altus Geomatics, a private land survey company that conducts extensive land mapping and site surveys. The company employs its own 'first aid transportation plan' developed for every worksite. "It's an internal safety process," he explains, "a route we create with both mapping software and as text directions. We assess the potential hazards at any site, often remote, where we're working. We map out the directions to get either our people out to emergency responders or to get emergency responders in to us. We have a written copy of that plan on the dash of every truck. We hope we won't have to use it, but it's there if the need arises."

On his own acreage near Weyburn, Maloney takes that need for preparedness personally, too. His children, aged eight, six and four, have all memorized the property location. It's also next to the phone. "They can all rattle off the legal description so if they need to, they can get help to us."

more thoughtful about what to do ahead of a potential disaster," says Steve. "Like a lot of people who've been through this, we know how important it is to sleep at night knowing your family is safe

and that you've done all you can possibly to do prepare for the unthinkable." 

Karin Melberg Schwier



While Baxter can never be replaced, Otis has won the heart of the family.



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*"Sometimes, all I need is the air that
I breathe, and to love you..."*
– The Hollies, 1972



 **KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER**

As romantic as that notion is, sometimes we need to be a little more academic about what's in the air inside our homes. Tighter building

construction may mean the 'good air in, bad air out' system gets blocked. There are other ways our indoor air gets polluted; smoking, pet

dander, mould, old asbestos insulation and other pollutants make our air less than fresh and sometimes even dangerous.

It doesn't help to get panicky, but we need to be informed about the warning signs and understand what to do if we suspect a culprit. ➤

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Natural Gas

SaskEnergy adds an odour to natural gas so if you smell skunk or rotten eggs, there may well be a problem. Natural gas is invisible, but if a vapour, ground frosting or large patch of brown vegetation is visible, there may be a leak. A high-pitched hissing or roaring noise are clues, too. SaskEnergy says to get out immediately. Don't use any electrical switches, appliances, telephones, motor vehicles, or any sources of ignition such as lighters or matches. Call SaskEnergy's 24-hour emergency line from a safe place 1-888-7000-GAS (427).

CO2

Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas, created by a fuel-burning appliance or vehicle. SaskEnergy says symptoms are similar to that of the flu; headaches, nausea, dizziness, shortness of breath and unexplained fatigue. If your carbon monoxide detector goes off, or if you think there's a leak, SaskEnergy or the fire department should be contacted immediately.

It's good home stewardship to give your furnace an annual



tune-up from a reputable mechanical company. Make sure the attached garage door is well sealed and don't idle your car in the garage. Never use a gas barbecue or kerosene or oil lamps indoors, and don't let anyone smoke indoors.

For both natural gas and carbon monoxide, SaskEnergy

encourages the installation of carbon monoxide detectors, and regular maintenance on all fuel-burning appliances. This includes regularly changing furnace filters, keeping appliance vents clear of ice buildup in the winter and scheduling home checkups/home heating tune-ups.

Radon

Saskatchewan is a hot spot for radon, a radioactive gas that occurs naturally when uranium in soil and rock breaks down. It is everywhere, but if it accumulates to high levels inside, there is a health risk.

Kent Mohn with Sun Ridge Residential Inc. says Canada

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has lagged a bit behind other countries on the radon front. Sun Ridge has found that people coming to Saskatoon from elsewhere ask about radon testing quite frequently being a topic high on their radar.

"It's not an exact science," Kent says. "Radon gas fluctu-

ates and a professional test has to be carried out over at least three months to be reliable. Don't rush to get quick tests done," Kent says, "If someone at your door tells you they'll sell you a test that gives results two days or can eliminate radon by putting on a furnace filter, it's simply not

true. You need to be careful and any reputable radon organization, including Sun Ridge, will refer to the Health Canada guidelines." Sun Ridge is certified by the Canadian National Radon Proficiency Program (CNRPP) to provide Radon Measurement and Mitigation services.

While he doesn't advise panic, Kent does say there is reason for concern if there are smokers in your home. If your house is drawing air from the foundation and soil and if it isn't cycling properly through the home, radon gas can settle in lower areas. If there are high levels of radon present and homeowners smoke, there is a significantly increased risk of lung cancer.

"Health Canada indicates that 17 per cent of lung cancers are the result of radon gas," Kent says. "It's important to realize that smoking is a risk, but when you combine with radon gas it's not just an add-on. It's an exponential add-on."

Depending on the individual house conditions and average annual radon levels, there are a variety of mitigation strategies available. A radon mitigation professional may recommend

sealing cracks in the foundation, mechanical ventilation, or in extreme cases, the installation of a sub-slab depressurization fan system.

Sun Ridge Residential Inc. is a national pioneer in the field of housing science, instrumental in the development of energy efficient housing in Canada.

Mould

This fungus likes to release spores into the air; it may show up as a smudge or discolouration on surfaces or grow unseen behind walls or ceiling tiles. It smells musty and loves damp and wet conditions. We use a lot of water in our homes as we clean, cook, run the teakettle and humidifier, or if the dryer vent leaks. The key to prevention is a good ventilation system.

Kent from Sun Ridge uses this analogy. "If you blow up a plastic bag and put your hand inside, it'll feel warm and moist. If your house doesn't have a good ventilation system, you're simply putting moist, damp air into the home and it can't get out." The trick is to make sure fresh air comes in and moist air gets out so a good mechanical ➤



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ventilation system is critical.

Mould isn't fussy; it'll take damp however it can get it. You might have a good mechanical system, but if you have water seeping in through the foundation or basement windows, or if you've had flooding, you'll need to dry things out. A dehumidifier will help.

If mould is a minor surface problem, you can clean it up with vinegar, bleach, borax or other products. If the mould has penetrated a porous surface, you may need to remove damaged walls, ceilings and carpet. Discuss waterproofing solutions with reputable foundation experts.

Asbestos

If you've got it, the general rule is don't mess with it. Asbestos fibre was a common building insulation; vermiculate was often used in the 1960s. If it's cut or stirred up, the fibre particles lift into the air. If it's well contained, a common course of action is to cover it with other insulation. If you do want it out, get professionals to handle the job.

Allergens

Pet dander, dust mites, mildew and a lot of other little critters like to live with us and float around in the air, too. Itchy eyes and throat, and breathing problems are all the result. Wash bedding frequently. Dust and vacuum well. Change the filters on your furnace and air conditioner four times a year. Some types of indoor plants help take pollutants out of the air. You can

also have your furnace ducts cleaned by a professional who uses a high powered machine, some equipped with video cameras so you can see any real problem areas or blockages in your duct work.

Take a Breath

To ensure our homes are as healthy for our minds and bodies as possible, arm yourself with good information. A first step is a visit to the Health Canada website: www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Read the Residential Indoor Air Quality Guidelines and if you suspect a problem, they have some good suggestion for a remedy. (i)

Karin Melberg Schwier

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CRAIG SILLIPHANT



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

If you're friends with Ron Loucks, you're flush with delicious smoked meat for life. He loves to use his smoker, and because he mostly smokes game meat that legally can't be sold, he has a lot to give away each year. I recently paid Ron a visit so he could show me the fine art of making smoked goose jerky.

When I walked into his kitchen, I knew immediately that he wasn't messing around. The first difference I noticed between my kitchen and Ron's, was that where I have one fridge, he has two fridges *and* a deep freeze—that's dedication.

In fact, Ron has been smoking meats for around 35 years, perfecting his techniques and marinades. Admittedly, this felt a bit like cheating, learning 35 years worth of secrets in an afternoon, but hey, we writers are a lazy yet inquisitive lot.

Ron discovered this lifelong passion in his early 20s, when a friend introduced him to his first real taste of smoked meat on a frozen lake one winter.

"I went ice fishing with a buddy and he brought out smoked fish for us to try," he says. "I liked it, so I started with fish, giving it a whirl here and there. I had crude methods at

first, barrels and dry smoke. But the flavour was there."

A few years ago, my Dad had one of those store bought smokers that he'd use once in awhile, sometimes with deer meat that he or his friends had procured. So I assumed that being the expert, Ron would have a smoker that would be the envy of the richest cowboys at Cabela's. On the contrary—as Ron showed me, you don't need a fancy schmancy smoker to do the job right.

"I bought my smoker at an auction for six bucks," he confides with a grin.

He took me to his back-

yard to see the smoker and as I walked across his green lawn, I could smell it right away, an unmistakable and delicious smoky aroma. The smoker is basically a metal closet, less than six feet tall. Ron opened the door for me to reveal shelves for metal trays in the upper part of the compartment, and on the bottom, a bowl full of smoking chips. Propane fuels the heat, which in turn heats the briquettes that smolder the smoke chips. Maple or cherry are Ron's wood chips of choice.

"Years ago we'd go into ➤



When Ron Loucks isn't hunting or processing the meat he harvests, he operates a residential lawn care (regular grass cutting, power raking, aeration) and snow shoveling business: ronloucks@sasktel.net.

the woods and get willows for flavour," he says. "You'd have to clean the bark off. But the cherry chips are much nicer."

Smoked meat (including fish) has been around since as long as recorded history can remember—since caveman days. Because caves didn't have chimneys, they became pretty smoky when cooking with fire. Meat was hung to dry, and it was soon discovered that as the smoke drove away flies, the meat took on a better flavour, and it would last longer before rotting than meat that had only been dried. As man evolved, pre-curing the meat in salt or salty brines was added to the process, which was an even more effective preservation process. That far

back, food preservation, not flavour, was the main goal of smoking; they used a lot of salt and exposed the meat to smoke for days on end.

Of course, contemporary times meant modern transportation and food preservative chemicals, which made it faster and easier to move goods over long distances. Heavy salting and smoking declined, except as a way to flavour the meat.

In 1939, the Torry Kiln was invented in Scotland, allowing for smoking on mass levels, becoming the archetype for modern large-scale commercial smokers. However, as I learned, smoking can still easily be done in a more traditional manner.



The main meat that Ron showed me how to smoke that day was specifically goose jerky from Canada and snow geese. While he does do some hunting, he also gets a lot of the birds from outfitters and American hunters that he has met online or through other contacts. Apparently, you can get quite a bit of meat from some of these hunters at no charge.

"[One outfitter I met] had 219 birds from several hunters on just the one day that I went to meet him," says Ron.

The day I met with Ron, we started with 14 lbs of meat, divided into manageable sections in big metal bowls. Ron would take pieces out, cutting them into roughly quarter inch strips and placing them in a Rubbermaid container.

"You have to make sure to cut down the thicker places in the meat or you'll have raw spots," he advises.

Once we had all the meat cut, Ron added his special sweet and spicy marinade (we'll include the recipe so you can try it for yourself) which he has been perfecting for years. Sometimes he adjusts the recipe to suit the tastes of the person to whom he plans on giving a particular batch.

"You can make it sweeter

or hotter, depending on what you like," he explains. "I like sweeter so I just take out the peppers."

That was the point where I discovered why Ron had so many fridges; the raw meat must keep until it's ready to be smoked. The meat needs to be marinated for about four days, stirring it periodically over the course of that time to work the marinade through.

Once that is done, you place the meat on trays and put it into the smoker; if there are a lot of trays, then you'll need about 10 to 12 hours of smoking time, but only about seven hours if you only have a couple of trays. You need to keep the temperature between about 150° and 180° to achieve 'hot smoking' (there's also a such thing as cold smoking which occurs below 126°). But be careful, because if the smoker gets higher than 185° the meat can shrink excessively and split, cooking away the fat to give you smaller and tougher strips of meat.

"You really have to watch the jerky," says Ron. "You learn from trial and error."

As they do on television cooking shows, Ron had some fresh jerky for me to try, since the batch we made still had to marinate for



several days. I bit into the goose jerky, and found that it was much softer than regular beef jerky, because goose is a more tender meat. The flavour was pretty amazing; it started with a sweet, deep smoky tone, and finished with an aftertaste of spicy heat. Ron gave me several bags to take

home, which I knew wouldn't last long.

This led me to my next thought: if Ron makes all this jerky in a year, he must be some kind of a jerky devouring fiend, right? He has dedicated 35 years to perfecting recipes for smoking not only jerky, but also other things (he also

showed me how to inject brine into a full bird for smoking). So he must love it. Turns out, for Ron, making jerky is more about the art of doing something well and sharing it with friends and family.

"I have a stockpile in the freezer," he says. "I probably only eat about a bag a year. But

I guess I eat lots of it testing the consistency. Sometimes I take some to my brother's cabin so we can eat it while we sit and drink beer. The thing is, I'd rather make something *good* and give it away." 

Craig Silliphant

CANADA GOOSE JERKY

15 lbs goose breast (or duck, elk, moose, deer)

Marinade:

4T Morton Tender Quick home meat cure

½ cup coarse salt

2 ½ cups Demerara sugar

2 ½ cups yellow sugar

1/3 cup onion powder

¼ cup coarse black pepper

1/3 cup garlic powder

¼ cup red pepper flakes

2 litres water (or soup stock (veg or chicken), or half and half. Ron recommends homemade.)



Clean and prepare breasts, carefully examine for any shot in the meat.

Slice into ¼ inch pieces. Make sure the slices are same thickness so they smoke evenly. Make each slice "jerky size," 3 or 4 inches long. Vary the sizes. Put meat in large plastic tub.

Add marinade to meat and mix well. By hand is best.

Finally add 2 cups of pancake syrup (no name is fine) and mix well. Make sure meat slices aren't folded or they miss out on absorbing the marinade.

Marinate for 4 days, keep cool, mix thoroughly (and unfold pieces) 4 to 5 times a day.

Remove meat from marinade, which can be discarded.

Spray smoker racks with vegetable spray. Lay each piece of jerky on the racks.

No need to preheat the smoker before putting the meat in. Try to keep heat around the 180 degrees. If it gets hotter, watch carefully and open doors to let cool down. If the smoker has a heat control, then 160 degrees is fine and smoke for 8 hours. If not heat controlled, the process should take 8 to 12 hours depending on the thickness of the slices.

Ron's advice: Before buying a smoker, do some research. Some models have elements that don't last. A homemade smoker is a coveted possession!

HOMEtown Reflections

 JEFF O'BRIEN

ON BROADWAY



Home and Central Bakeries at 722 Broadway in the 1920s.

Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - LH 3643-1

Before there was an 8th Street or a 20th Street, before there was a Traffic Bridge or a Circle Drive, before there was even a Saskatoon, there was Broadway Avenue—Saskatoon's first, oldest and most historic street.

Although people had been travelling through here for thousands of years, the first permanent settlers didn't arrive until 1883. Abstainers all, they were fleeing the whiskey-soaked cities of the east in search of their own, alcohol-free version of the Promised Land. So they packed up their belongings and made the long trek west, to Saskatoon, here amidst the pure waters and clean airs of the Canadian prairies. And running through the heart of this boozeless prairie paradise was Broadway.

The original survey plan of Saskatoon was drawn up in August 1883. Broadway



Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives

Avenue—a street so wide you could turn a horse-drawn wagon around in it—ran down the middle, following the path of the old trail from Moose Woods

to Batoche and turning at the end to parallel the riverbank. Originally called Broadway Avenue North, this stretch was later renamed University Drive.

*The very first business on Broadway
was a general store that
Dr. J.H.C. Willoughby ran out of a tent.*

Broadway was Saskatoon's first commercial district. This was before the railway came, before the present-day downtown was settled, when the name "Saskatoon" belonged only to the area we now call Nutana. Most everyone lived in sod huts or tents at first, and the very first business on Broadway was a general store that Dr. J.H.C. Willoughby ➤

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Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives - 1100-2032-002

ran out of a tent. But in August of that year, a shipment of lumber arrived down the river from Medicine Hat, and more substantial buildings began to go up, including a store on the corner of Broadway and Main, houses and the Temperance Colony building.

Broadway's first brush with history came in 1885,

when the simmering dispute between Louis Riel's Metis and the Dominion government suddenly exploded into violence. Fear stalked the colony. Men were sent to Moose Jaw to pick up rifles and ammunition. There was even talk of moving everyone out to Yorath Island for protection. As it happened, the closest

Saskatoon got to events was when Chief Whitecap and a group of First Nation and Metis came up Broadway on their way to Batoche. The colonists placed riflemen in Grace Fletcher's store and in Willoughby's stable across the road, and sent a deputation out to negotiate. Whitecap and his party agreed to go around.

Later, they stopped in at the Kusch farm and ate all of Mrs. Kusch's doughnuts. Other than that, Saskatoon was unscathed by the events of 1885.

By 1888, there were 13 businesses in and around Broadway including two stores, a tinsmith, a physician, a builder, a mason, a teacher, a dressmaker and Saskatoon's

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Broadway district, 1927.

Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives

first hotel, Garrison House, which was also its first stone building. Long since torn down, this is now the site of the Bulk Cheese Warehouse, which sits on Don Garrison's original foundation.

Tragedy struck Broadway in January of that year when a young settler named Ted Meeres left a house party in a raging blizzard to check on his cows in a barn across the street. He got lost in the driving snow. They found him later, frozen solid, five miles south of the city.

Things changed in 1890 when the railway came through, bypassing Saskatoon to stop, instead, on the flats across the river. History had passed Broadway by. In the years to come, when they

talked about Saskatoon, it would be the bustling new town across the river by the train station they meant, not the sleepy little Temperance Colony at Broadway and Main.

But Broadway continued to be an important commercial street. Over the years, its businesses served not only Nutana, but also the farms and settlements south of Saskatoon, all the way to Dundurn and Whitecap. During the boom that preceded the First World War, stores like John Allwood's harness shop and the Sun Confectionery (which also sold ice cream and soft drinks) did a bustling business. Even during the 1930s, Broadway was the place to shop for both locals and for visitors coming up from the south. People ➤



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B&A Service Station at Five Corners, 1967.



Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - LH 401



Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives – 1100-1737-002

here still remember businesses like the Red Robin Café, the Davis Dairy, Frank Harrington's jewellery store and others from those days. There was lots of residential, too, with people living above shops and in apartment blocks up and down the street.

Saskatoon's first school-house was the Little Stone School, built on Broadway in 1887. A two-room brick school was added in 1905, and the present-day Victoria School in 1909. For a while, all three buildings stood there together. In 1911, the Little Stone School was moved onto the new University of Saskatchewan campus, making it Saskatoon's first ever recognized heritage building. Victoria School, meanwhile, has been a focus of the Broadway community since the beginning, providing space for evening classes and community groups, and ➤

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Farnam Block, 1965.



Photo: City of Saskatoon Archives - 1100-1458-003

1883 Temperance Colony pamphlet.



Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - LH 4737

even hosting a public kitchen during the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic, when a small army of volunteers prepared and delivered meals to families laid low by the disease.

Broadway's other school was St. Joseph's. Built in 1928, it served Nutana's Roman Catholic community until 1980, when it became the Native Survival School and then later Joe Duquette, before becoming Oskayak High School.

In 1913, the first streetcars of the Saskatoon Municipal Railway rumbled down Broadway on tracks that went as far as 8th Street before heading east on their way, ➤



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Garrison House, 1909.



Photo: Local History Room, Saskatoon Public Library - LH 3217-1

The Crypt, in the basement of the Farnam Block, 1969.

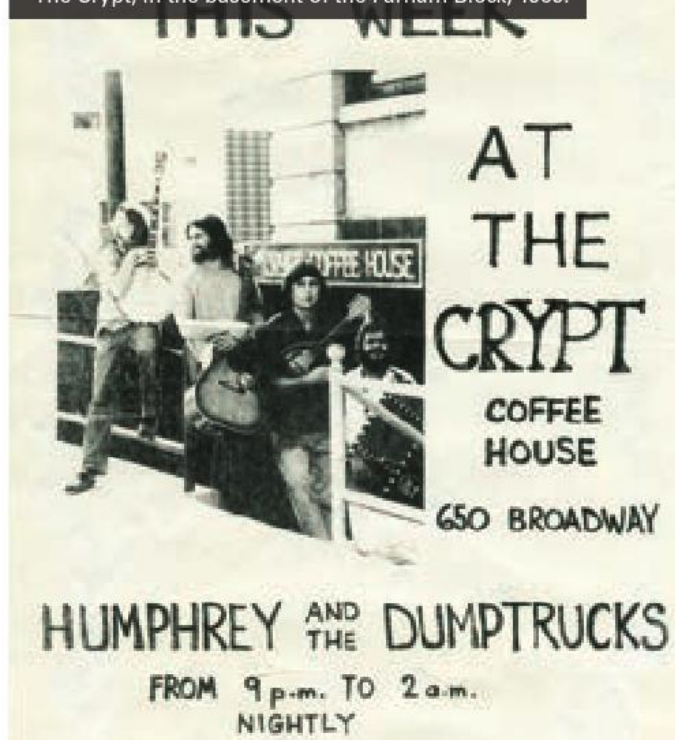


Photo: 1100-30128 courtesy of the City of Saskatoon Archives

eventually, to Sutherland. They sold the streetcars in 1951, but buses still run down Broadway and in some places the old tracks are still there, buried beneath the modern paving.

Ironically, given its roots,

Broadway is nowadays home to an astonishing variety of places to drink. The oldest is Bud's, a hard rocking blues club in the main floor of the boom-era Sommerfeld Block, in what used to be a branch

of the Royal Bank. Lydia's, in the equally-venerable Farnam Block, was a fixture on Saskatoon's live music scene for many years before closing suddenly in 2013. Back in the day, Saskatoon bands like Humphrey and the Dumptrucks played in a club called the Crypt, in the Farnam Block basement, and Joni Mitchell got her start in a Broadway coffee house called the Louis Riel. Meanwhile, places like Amigos and the Hose and Hydrant—a restored municipal Fire Hall—while not precisely “on” Broadway, are certainly “of” Broadway. Others, like the Wash-n-Slosh, (“Saskatoon’s only Laundry-bar!”) and its Z-shaped pool table, are gone but not forgotten.

Broadway is also Saskatoon’s chief entertainment district. It is home to a raft of festivals and street fairs, most notably the Fringe Festival, a live theatre event that has been held here since 1990. The Broadway Theatre has been an integral part of the street since 1946. While it hit

a low point in the 1970s when it was Saskatoon’s premiere adult movie theatre, today it does a booming business as an art house theatre and live performance venue.

A veritable cornucopia of bookshops and music stores, hobby shops and boutiques, banks, bakeries, drugstores, coffee shops, photo stores—Gibson’s, naturally, but others as well—lawyers’ offices and doctors’ offices, massage studios and barber shops, and nearly anything else you might imagine have come and gone on Broadway over the years. It would take far more space than we have to do justice to all of them, or to the many fascinating people who have made their homes here. Probably, you’ll simply have to go see for yourself. As Don Kerr once wrote, in the *Saskatoon History Review* in 1999: “Sometimes Broadway is nice, friendly. Sometimes, if you hang out here long enough, it’s perfect.”

Jeff O’Brien



TEAR DOWN THESE WALLS!

When to Tear Down a Home



KARIN MELBERG SCHWIER

As much as we hate to admit it, some things just don't last forever. That includes the house we live in, that sanctuary where our children are raised and where family is celebrated. There can be huge emotional attachment, but if a house is really on its last legs, maybe it's time pack up the memories and tear it down.

Andrew Wagner of Maison

Fine Homes and Interior Design is a Mechanical Engineer and holds a P.Eng. and Project Management Professional (PMP) designations. With many demolitions and infill builds under Maison's belt, Andrew says the fate of your home deserves some careful thought.

"When we're making an assessment, we look at what

life might be left in the house," he says. Cracks in the foundation, evidence of water in the basement, cracks on the exterior all raise flags. "Typically, the lifecycle of a house built in Saskatoon is about 80 years. There are exceptions, of course, but in older neighbourhoods some are at the end of a useful life."

While We're At It...

Renovations can snowball. "It's a famous line we run into all the time," Andrew says. "It's human nature; people add on and then they have a hard look at the older portion of the home, too. While we still have our contractor, while we're at it, let's do flooring and the bathroom upstairs. The electrical system ►





is over 30 years old so we need to replace. Oh, now we need a new furnace and new mechanical system." Suddenly starting new is looking more attractive.

"If you cost out what it would take to extend the life of that house, what you put into a renovation can be more than the appraised value at the end of the project." A realtor assesses the value according to the year it was built and depreciates based on that, then adds the value of the renovation. "So you're not going to get the same value that

you would on a new house," Andrew explains. "At the end of the day, you'll probably end up with a higher valuation if you build new."

Find Out Where You Stand

Ask a realtor to do a market valuation on your home to sell as is. Have a contractor do a realistic scope of work for a renovation. Think about the next 20 years. Staying? Selling? Add up all those costs; weigh selling now versus how long you want to stay versus how much will it cost to renovate ➤



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ANDREW'S DECISION TREE:

- How much life is left in building? More than 15-20 years, then it's a candidate for reno or moving off.
- What's the cost to reno? Cost to build new?
- If you want to keep it despite problems or it's just too small, consider a surface reno to keep it livable, rentable, or consider selling.

versus how much will it cost to build new.

Andrew says if a house has perhaps 15 to 20 years of good life left, then a renovation or moving the house might be warranted. If it's determined the house has fewer than 10 years left, the decision to tear down is an easier one. If a demo is the answer, bring in Habitat for Humanity to salvage materials of value or sell as much as possible on Kijiji.

"You can avoid filling up the landfill and save the costs of disposal that, for an average house demo in the city, can run \$20-\$30,000."

Neighbourhood Sensitivities

Andrew understands that people are concerned with the character of the neighbourhood. If the contractor and architect are sensitive to the character of the street, an infill house can blend in very nicely.

"Old doesn't always mean heritage. Even though a modest character home may be a desirable feature of the neighbourhood, it may not have been built to last 80-plus years and structurally doesn't warrant refurbishing. It may have not been maintained well enough over the years to retain its residual structural integrity." 

Karin Melberg Schwier

WHEN IT'S HAMMER TIME:

Andrew Wagner offers a few tips for making the tear down process as smooth as possible:

- Once you've decided to pull the plug, salvage all you can. Sell or donate to charitable organizations (remember your tax receipt).
- Let nearby neighbours know what's happening and when. Ask if they might want items, including perennials, shrubs, anything that will be lost to the bulldozer.
- Select a company with a lot of demo experience. Find out the costs involved, and whether there will be any surprises like charges for new sewer and waterline connections.
- Erect a site fence, put up a contractor sign with phone number, and if the homeowner agrees, post a house drawing so neighbours can see what's to come.
- Ensure all site service disconnects, demo permits, notifications are done. Set up port-a-potties for construction crew.
- When you set the date for the actual demo, do another check-in with neighbours. There will be noise, dust and shaking from heavy equipment.
- When that big equipment arrives, things move fast. A 100-year-old house can disappear almost without a trace in just a few hours.

Solar Gardens

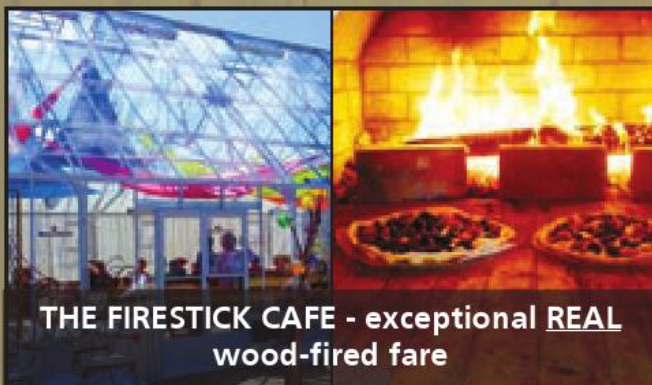
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